

REMARKS

Claims 14-18, 20, 22, 23 and 25-30 were previously pending in the application. By the Amendment, claims 14, 20, 26, 29 and 30 have been amended, and claims 15-18, 22-23, 25 and 27-28 remain unchanged. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The claims stand rejected under the cited prior art of record. Specifically, Claims 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 23, 26 and 29 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Laurent (U.S. Patent No. 5,145,148). Additionally, Claims 14-18, 20, 23, 26 and 30 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) over Hofmann et al. (WO99/37517, USP 6,322,049), and Claims 14-18, 20, 23, 26 and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kolze et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,697,608) in view of Brehm et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,636,828). Claims 22 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Laurent in view of Grant et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,188,017), and over Kolze in view of Brehm and Grant. Claims 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 23 and 26-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kaselow (U.S. Patent No. 4,830,602) in view of Laurent, and claims 14-18, 20, 23 and 26-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kaselow in view of Kolze and Brehm.

Independent Claims

Independent claim 14 of the present application recites a gas tap that includes a gas path and further includes an electromagnetic safety valve for closing the gas path. The safety valve includes an armature housing with a mobile magnetic anchor in the housing and a valve seat. The mobile magnetic anchor includes a valve closing element which presses on the valve seat to close the gas path. At least two magnetic anchor guide sections

are positioned and axially spaced apart in the armature housing to guide the magnetic anchor, where the two magnetic anchor guide sections are made from different materials, a first one of the two magnetic anchor guide sections being made from metal and a second one of the two magnetic anchor guide sections being made from a plastic material. Each of the magnetic anchor guide sections is a separate and independent component. An electromagnetic coil activates the mobile magnetic anchor and the valve closing element to open the gas path when voltage is applied to the electromagnetic coil. Also, the electromagnetic coil is arranged as a separate component outside of the armature housing on a magnetic insert.

Independent claims 26 and 29 recite a magnetic insert with the foregoing features as applicable and additionally recite that both/all of the magnetic anchor guide sections directly guide the magnetic anchor. Independent claim 30 additionally recites that the electromagnetic coil is mounted on an outer circumference of the first magnetic anchor guide section.

Interview

Applicants extend their appreciation to Examiners Rost and Fristoe for their courtesy in conducting the interview with Applicants' representative on August 5, 2010. During the interview, Applicants representative discussed the objection to the drawings and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112. Amendments to the claims were also proposed with regard to the direct guiding of the magnetic anchor by the anchor guide sections. Examiner Rost also suggested that we amend the claims to specify that the anchor guide sections are separate and independent components. Applicants' representative also discussed distinctions between the invention and the references of record.

Drawings

With regard to the drawing objection under 37 C.F.R. §1.83(a), as discussed during the interview, Applicants submit that the varied cross-hatching in Fig. 2 illustrates different components. The varied cross-hatching was included in the drawings filed May 20, 2008. Moreover, claim 20 recites that one of the magnetic anchor guide sections is positioned inside of the gas tap and the other of the magnetic anchor guide sections is positioned outside of the gas tap. As shown in Fig. 2, in an exemplary embodiment, the anchor guide section being of a plastic material is positioned inside the gas tap, while the anchor guide section being of metal is positioned outside the gas tap. This construction is consistent with the subject matter of one interpretation of claim 20, and as a consequence, Applicants submit that the requirements of 37 C.F.R. §1.83(a) are satisfied. Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

Claim 20 has been amended to omit reference to a “first” one of the two magnetic anchor guide sections and a “second” one of the two magnetic anchor guide sections. Rather, claim 20 recites that one of the two magnetic anchor guide sections is positioned inside of the gas tap and the other of the two magnetic anchor guide sections is positioned outside of the gas tap. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Rejections over Prior Art

With regard to the Laurent patent, as discussed previously and during the interview, merely guiding the pin 38 in Laurent does not amount to guiding the armature 20, particularly since Laurent is silent with regard to whether the pin 38 is even connected to the armature 20. The Office Action refers to pin 54 being received in a “depression of the element 20” in Fig. 1. There is no connection, however, and further “guiding” is not needed in view of the armature guide structure. Laurent also lacks the claimed two anchor guide sections of different materials. Per the Examiner’s suggestion during the interview, claim 14 has been amended to clarify that each of the at least two magnetic anchor guide sections is a separate and independent component. Support for this subject matter can be found, for example, in Fig. 2. With regard to independent claims 26 and 29, these claims have been similarly amended to clarify that each of the magnetic anchor guide sections is a

separate and independent component. Additionally, claims 26 and 29 recite that all/both of the at least two magnetic anchor guide sections directly guide the magnetic anchor (see FIG. 2). As noted, the components referenced in the Office Action at best guide the pin 38 and do not *directly* guide the armature 20.

With regard to the Hofmann publication, as discussed during the interview, although element 13 in Hofmann is referred to as a "guide body," the guide body 13 does not serve a guiding function for the magnet armature 14. The guide body 13 rather serves to guide fluid under pressure through conduits 39. Indeed, as seen in Fig. 2, the shaft 29 of cylindrical body 30 is spaced from the through bore 38 in the guide body 13. Consequently, it does not appear that the through bore 38 serves a guiding function for the shaft 29 or, in turn, the magnet armature 14.

Hofmann also lacks the feature defined in claims 26 and 30 wherein each of the at least two magnetic anchor guide sections is a separate and independent component, and wherein all/both of the magnetic anchor guide sections directly guide the magnetic anchor.

With regard to Kolze in view of Brehm, as also discussed during the interview, neither Kolze nor Brehm would remotely lead those of ordinary skill in the art to include a second anchor guide without reference to Applicants' disclosure. Applicants take issue with the conclusion that if a primary reference includes an "anchor guide" formed of material A and a secondary reference includes an "anchor guide" formed of a material B, that it would have been obvious to modify the primary reference to include *both* the claimed two magnetic anchor guide sections respectively made from different materials. Even under the Supreme Court's *KSR* standard, Applicants submit that it would not have been obvious to create structure not included or suggested in the prior art (i.e., a second anchor guide). It would similarly not have been obvious to provide the claimed two anchor guide sections respectively of different materials. Still further, the references do not suggest the use of two magnetic anchor guide sections that each are separate and independent components, and the references lack the claimed direct guiding of the magnetic anchor by all/both of the magnetic anchor guide sections.

With regard to the dependent claims, Applicants submit that these claims are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency on an allowable independent claim. The

additional references to Grant and Kaselow do not correct the deficiencies noted above with regard to the subject matter of the independent claims.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are thus respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above, entry of the present Amendment and allowance of Claims 14-18, 20, 22, 23 and 25-30 are respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned. If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

Respectfully submitted,

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